

Date:

MEMBER SINCE LAST FALL

Rousselot Asks

Birch Scrutiny

Society Claimed Patriotic *GOP Leader* *Hits 'Distortion'*

By LEONARD KREIDT

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Congressman John Rousselot (R-25th District) of San Marino has been a member of the John Birch Society since last September, but yesterday emphatically called for an immediate investigation of the ultra-conservative group.

Speaking at a press conference held in his West Covina field office, Rousselot said he belongs to a "San Gabriel area" chapter of the society which he joined at the invitation of several friends. "I believe," he said, "that in the main the society is designed to oppose the Communist threat in a positive, legal, and correct way."

He took issue with published articles about the society, accusing them of misquotation, quoting out of context, and distortion. This has been true, he asserted, in the quoting of some statements attributed to Robert Welch, founder, president, and acknowledged leader of the society.

Some statements by Robert Welch have been quoted as being representative of the whole society, he said. First, these were made several years ago, were made privately, and are not a part of the society literature or tenets. Second, these statements have been misquoted and stated out of context. For example, he quoted a passage from page 161 of The Blue Book, a basic guide to new society members:

"Those members who cease to feel the necessary degree of loyalty can either resign or will be put out before they build up any splintering following of their own inside the society. As I (Welch) have said, we mean business every step of the way."

Rousselot said that at this point some persons ceased the quotations or jumped several sentences down in the same paragraph, leaving out the following three sentences which the congressman feels are vital to a proper understanding of the society:

"We can allow for different opinion. We shall need your advice and we

expect to use the normal measure of diplomacy always called for in dealing with human beings."

The next sentence according to Rousselot is normally quoted following omission of the above three:

"But whenever differences of opinion become translated into a lack of loyal support we shall have shortfalls or climactic falling apart without going through any congressional or called democratic process. Otherwise Communists, Hitlerites would bog down in interminable disagreements, schisms and feuds before we ever become effective."

Rousselot said the key phrase in the quotation is "lack of loyal support." He said that the only time a member is asked to leave the society is when his disagreement results in his losing loyal support for the organization.

I am certain," he added, "that many civic organizations, service clubs, fraternal groups and certainly political party organizations and their predict groups, can not afford to have members who lack loyal support or who engage in ragging' debates." It is the inherent right of any voluntary group to establish its own procedures for ensuring that a member does not impede the goals of the organization through the strife and dissension that comes from a lack of loyal support."